

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐
no ☐

Property Name: National Guard Armory Inventory Number: SM-463
Address: 23250 Hollywood Road Md. Rt. 245 City: Leonardtown Zip Code: 20650
County: St. Mary's USGS Topographic Map: Leonardtown Quad
Owner: Maryland Military Department Is the property being evaluated a district? No X yes
Tax Parcel Number: 44 Tax Map Number: 121 Tax Account ID Number: 03-015025
Project: _____ Agency: _____
Site visit by MHT Staff: X no yes Name: _____ Date: _____
Is the property located within a historic district? yes No X

If the property is within a district

District Inventory Number: _____

NR-listed district yes Eligible district yes District Name: _____

Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource yes no Non-contributing but eligible in another context _____

If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)

Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible X yes no

Criteria: X A B X C D Considerations: A B C D E F G None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:
The St. Mary's County Historical Society, the Lexington
Park Library, Dedication Program for the National
Guard Armory December 11, 1954

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

The National Guard Armory in Leonardtown is one of three armories constructed in Southern Maryland during the Cold War era. Completed in 1954, it is located on the Hollywood-Leonardtown Road (Maryland Route 245) on the outskirts of Leonardtown. Similar armories were constructed in Calvert (1953-54) and Charles (1948) counties.
Lawrence P. Sangston of Baltimore was the architect furnished the design for both the Calvert and Leonardtown armories.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended _____

Criteria: X A B X C D Considerations: A B C D E F G None

Comments: _____

Andrew Lewis
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

2/24/06
Date

Blair
Reviewer, NR Program

2/21/06
Date

200600061

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM**

Continuation Sheet No. 1

SM-463

The Leonardtown Armory is a two-story masonry building set on a concrete foundation. The central bay of the front façade is covered with sandstone panels. The brick is laid in five course American bond. The sandstone elements of the exterior feature Art Deco style detailing.

The main façade faces west and is seven bays wide with a slightly projecting central bay clad in sandstone. The central bay features a stepped parapet finished with sandstone coping. The sandstone slab above the door features an arrow motif that is repeated in the lighting fixtures that bracket the doors. A flagpole is positioned on each side of these lights. Recessed modern glass double doors have replaced the heavy wood doors that were originally on the building. A six-light metal window is located above the doors. The sandstone coping continues around the roof edge of the entire building.

The main bay is flanked on both sides by secondary bays, each containing three windows on the first and second floors. The windows on the first story are seated over continuous concrete bases that run along the first story of the remaining elevations. Attached to each side of the main block are one-story two bay wings.

The one story wing on the south elevation contains a set of double metal doors with six lights reinforced by metal mesh. The lower halves of both doors are louvered. A metal window is located to the right of the double doors and a second one-panel metal door is located to the right of the window. Attached to the rear of the one-story wing on this elevation is the vehicle storage area. The garage entrance is clad in sandstone panels and features a stepped parapet identical to the one on the main entry. The vehicle entry door has been removed and filled in with cement block painted red to match the building's brick, and the National Guard name panel above the door has been removed. The lintel above the door opening features the same arrow motif as that on central bay of the main elevation. Two metal bomb points are imbedded on either side of the threshold. The flanking bays each contain a one panel wood door on the first floor and one window opening on the second story. Each of the windows contains four lights and is protected by metal bars.

The rear, east elevation is the back wall of the drill hall. The asphalt-shingled gambrel roof of the drill hall rises above the flat roof on the front of the building. On this elevation all but two of the original seven windows on the second story have been bricked up. The remaining two are identical to the windows on the south elevation. Also visible at the northern end of this elevation is the one story wing. New glass and metal doors have been added to this wing to serve as a second entrance into the library. This wing remains separate from the library space and once was an indoor shooting range for the National Guard. Today the Election Commission stores voting machines there. Three metal windows covered with bars and chain link pierce the one-story wing on this elevation.

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Continuation Sheet No. 2

SM-463

The north elevation of the one story wing features two metal windows and a metal door on the end closest to the main elevation.

History

The Maryland National Guard took part in the D-Day invasion of Normandy during World War II, landing at Omaha Beach. As the Cold War escalated in the late 1940s and fear of nuclear attack was a national concern, National Guard units throughout the United States were called upon to remain at the ready in case of a national emergency.

A unit of the Maryland National Guard was functioning in St. Mary's County by the late nineteen forties. The first organizational meeting for the National Guard was sponsored by the American Legion, which wanted to recruit young men for a new locally based unit. Colonel Claypool of the Second Army came to the county to aid in the process. In 1947, Colonel Claypool contacted National Guard Captain James Raley of Leonardtown and asked him to take command of an Engineer Company in the town. Captain Raley visited local communities and presented talks at high schools about the benefits of being a guardsman. A group was put together and held its first drill in the gym of Leonard Hall School on November 19, 1947. The next step would be the construction of a local armory.

According to Mr. William R. Riley, Director of Installations for the Maryland Military Department, the Calvert and Leonardtown armories were constructed because of lobbying by then Maryland Senator Louis Goldstein of Calvert County. His constituents, who were active in the National Guard at that time, had to travel to the Washington area for their monthly training. They complained about the hardship of commuting such a long distance. Although Adjutant General of the Maryland National Guard, Milton Record, was opposed to the construction, Goldstein won out.

Adjutant General Record decided to make Southern Maryland the recruiting area for the engineer battalions. St. Mary's Company B, 121st Engineer Battalion (C) was raised in 1948. The company drilled at various facilities in St. Mary's, chief among them the Charlotte Hall Military Academy, which was established before the Revolutionary War, and the Leonard Hall Military Academy. The Leonardtown Armory was constructed in 1953 and opened December 11, 1954 with a dedication ceremony. The Charlotte Hall Military Academy band played the national anthem, and State Senator Paul J. Bailey was the master of ceremonies. Major General Henry C. Evans and other National Guard officers delivered remarks. The Honorable Milton A. Record, Adjutant General, State of Maryland delivered the dedication address.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM**

Continuation Sheet No. 3

SM-463

Festivities included a dinner and dance for invited guests and an open house the next day. The new armory housed Company "B" 121 Battalion (C) of the Maryland National Guard. The program from the ceremony, decorated with the Battalion Insignia, lists the young men from Leonardtown and the county at large who were enlisted Guardsmen. The site functioned as a National Guard Armory from 1954 to 1979.

Decommissioned as a National Guard Armory in 1979, the building is leased to St. Mary's County by the Maryland Military Department. In the early 1980s, the first floor was used as county office space, and the second floor served as a dormitory for work release prisoners. After the floor space was reconfigured, the Leonardtown branch of the St. Mary's County Memorial Library moved into the first floor in 1984. The second story became home to the St. Mary's County Archives in 1989. The archives have since relocated, and the second floor now serves as administrative space for the library.

The Leonardtown National Guard Armory and its counterparts in Calvert and Charles County are a part of the history of the Cold War era in rural Southern Maryland. The armory is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A: because it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. It also fits Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period of construction.

Prepared by: _____

Date Prepared: _____



sm-463 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown
St. Mary's County, MD

August 2005

W elevation main facade
MD SHPO

1/11

photo: Teresa Wilson



sm-463 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown
St. Mary's County

August 2005

MD SHPO

2/11 W. elev.

Photo: Teresa Wilson



Sm-463 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown
St. Mary's County, MD

August 2005

W elevation MD SHPO

3/11
PRO-16 16 7819 @ BN
2652072 N N N+1-40 AC+03 ACs-04 SA110 GR08 Z126.3/100.0

Photo: Teresa Wilson



Sm-463 National Guard Armory LeonardsHavn
St Mary's County

August 2005

South elev. MD SHPO

4/11

photo: Teresa Wilson



SM-463 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown
St. Mary's County August 2005
MD SHPO

South elev

57
PROSINER 1 1 1 >011 © BN
2652032 N N N N-21 AC+04 ACS-04 SA110 GR00 Z126.3/100.0

photo: Teresa Wilson



SM-463 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown

St. Mary's County

MD SHPO

August 2005

6/11

PRO CNO - 1A > 015 @ BN
2652 032 N H N41-32 AC+03 AC-04 S4110 GR08 2126.3/100.0

photo: Teresa Wilson



Sm-463 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown
St. Mary's County

MD SHPO

East Elev

August 2005

7/11

photo: Teresa Wilson



SM-423 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown
St Marys County
August 21, 2015
MD SH PO

5/11

Photo: Teresa Wilton

MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD
LEONARDTOWN ARMORY

1953 - 1954

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CONTRACTOR

CHARLES S. TOWERS & CO.

SM- 463 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown
St Mary's County
Plaque in Lobby
August 2005
MD SHPO

PRO<M... 19 >025 © BN
2652 032 N N N+3-55 AC+01 AC= 04 SA110 GR08 Z126,3/100.0

Photo: Teresa Wilson

← MEETIN' ROOM
← LIBRARY OFFICES
← RESTROOMS →

MAIN LIBRARY

CHECK-OUT

NEW BOOKS

CHECK-OUT

TURN

Small Group
Areas Available

5M-443 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown

St Mary's County Lobby

MD SHPO

August 2005

10/11

PRO<NCT-21 >029 @ EN
2652 032 N N N-1-13 HC+03 AC-04 SALT0 GR08 2126.3/100.0

Photo: Teresa Wilson



SM-463 National Guard Armory, Leonardtown
St Mary's County
MD SHPO
August 2005

PRO<NO. 17 >021 @ BN
2652 032 N N N-4 29 AC+03 ACS-04 SAT10 GR08 Z126.3/100.0

11/11

Photo: Teresa Wilson